

STATE OF COLORADO
Department of State

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Election Watch List

April 3, 2007

County

Routt

Background

On November 7, 2006, the voters of Routt County waited in lines reportedly lasting up to four (4) hours in order to vote. Several of the Routt County Vote Centers did not close until close to 11:00 p.m. while others did not close until 10:00 p.m. Subsequently, a panel was convened at the request of Kay Weinland, Routt County Clerk and Recorder, to discuss the problems during the General Election and to develop recommendations for Ms. Weinland to utilize in all elections to follow.

Deficiencies

The clerk underestimated the number of machines needed to ensure that voter wait times were kept to a minimum. The allocation of the voting machines was miscalculated. One Steamboat Springs Vote Center had three (3) times as many voters as a vote center in the southern part of the county, but only had twice the number of machines. These difficulties with allocation likely contributed to the wait times experienced by voters.

§ 1-5-501(2)(b), C.R.S., requires counties that use electronic or electromechanical voting systems have a minimum of one voting booth per four hundred active registered electors for a general election. Routt County was in compliance with this statute for the 2006 General Election, however, there were still too few machines to accommodate voter turnout given the length of the ballot.

Remediation

The Secretary of State requires Routt County to examine the processes associated with distribution of the voting equipment, as well as the number of locations used as polling locations.

Routt County must provide to the Secretary of State a plan detailing the measures the county is implementing to ensure acceptable voter wait times. This plan must include details regarding the

number of polling locations to be used as well as the number of voting machines to be used at each of the locations or the manner in which paper ballots will supplement the voting machines at each polling location.

A contingency plan must be created and provided to the Secretary of State detailing procedures to be used in the event of technological failure during an election. The plan must address the county's back-up method for the electronic pollbook, for the vote center model, as well as communication procedures for election judges and county officials. If the county uses a hybrid system of voting machines and paper, the plan must address the method in which the county will provide more paper ballots to a location in the event of a shortage. Specific methods shall be determined by the county election official and communicated to the Secretary of State; the objective being to ensure that voters are not subjected to unreasonable wait times.